



# Virginia Cooperative Extension

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## A GOOD TURFGRASS MAINTENANCE PROGRAM FOR HENRICO COUNTY

Cool-season grasses such as tall fescue require approximately 2.7 pounds of nitrogen (N) per 1,000 square feet per year. As phosphorus (P) levels are usually sufficient in our soils, applying more in the form of fertilizer to the lawn may contribute to water pollution in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Therefore, phosphorus is no longer a component of lawn “maintenance” fertilizers, but can be purchased in a “starter” fertilizer. Apply a starter **ONLY** if soil test results recommend additional P. Potassium (K), the third nutrient provided by lawn fertilizer, also should be applied according to the results of a soil test. If additional K is needed, apply a “winterizer” or “fall” fertilizer blend. The “SON” lawn fertilization program outlined below is based upon nitrogen applications and recommends that cool-season grasses be fertilized in the fall—September, October, and November. Follow the directions given on the fertilizer label as they are designed to supply approximately 0.9 lb. of N per application.

### Fertilization For Cool-Season Lawns

<u>Time of Application</u>	<u>lbs. N to apply/1000 sq. ft.</u>
September	0.9
October	0.9
November	0.9

<b>Protecting and Promoting Growth</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>August</b>	<b>September</b>	<b>October thru November 15</b>
Control winter annual broadleaf weeds								Most effective
Control grassy weeds	Crabgrass 3/15 – 4/15					Annual bluegrass Wiregrass 8/15 – 9/15		
Control summer annual broadleaf weeds			Most effective					
Grub control					Most effective			
Prevent or control fungus disease	Fungicides are not necessary for well-managed home lawns							
Insect control	Insecticides are not necessary for most home lawns							
Aeration and seeding							Most effective	
Fertilizing							Most effective	
Mowing practices	Remove only one-third of leaf blade; mow tall fescue at 3 inches. Don't bag clippings							
Irrigation practices	Water deeply, every 5 to 7 days if needed							
Liming	Soil test every 2 to 3 years to determine needs							
Sun/shade	Turfgrasses require a minimum of 4 to 6 hours of sun daily							

<b>Water</b>	By rainfall or irrigation so that the lawn receives at least one inch of water per week (approximately 625 gallons per 1,000 square feet) during growing season. Calibrate irrigation by placing shallow pans in spray pattern and timing until one-inch is collected. During prolonged drought, let the lawn go dormant to conserve water.
<b>Mowing</b>	Cut often enough so that not more than one-third of the grass blade is removed per mowing. Leave clippings on lawn if possible. Mow cool-season grasses at a 3 inch height.
<b>Weed control</b>	Identify problem weeds and apply an appropriate herbicide if mechanical control is not practical. A broadleaf weed control product applied in spring and fall when weeds are actively growing will adequately control many broadleaf weeds such as chickweed, henbit, lespedeza, and spurge. For harder to control broadleaf weeds, contact the Extension Office for current recommendations. Read and carefully follow all label directions to prevent injury to nearby tree and shrubs.
<b>Crabgrass control</b>	Pre-emergence crabgrass herbicides (crabgrass “preventers”) should be applied in early spring before forsythia blooms fade and dogwoods come into full bloom. A repeat application according to label directions is usually necessary to provide season-long control.
<b>Disease and Insect control</b>	Generally fungicides and insecticides are not necessary for home lawns if recommended fertilization and irrigation practices are followed.
<b>Lime</b>	Have your soil tested every 2 to 3 years to determine lime needs. Soils need to be maintained at a pH of 6.2 to 6.5 for a good turf.
<b>Seed</b>	Generally, the improved turf-type tall fescues are recommended for the Richmond area. Contact the Extension Office for the list of current variety recommendations which is updated annually.  For new lawns the tall fescues are seeded at 4 to 6 pounds per 1,000 square feet. For over-seeding, use 2 to 3 pounds per 1,000 square feet.

**Questions?** Contact the Henrico Extension Office at 804-501-5160 or visit us at 8600 Dixon Powers Drive, Henrico, VA 23228. Mailing address: PO Box 90775, Henrico, VA 23273-0775. Visit our SMART Lawns page at <http://henrico.us/services/smartlawns/>.